

crime, and energy have all fallen victim to this trap set by the progressive ideas of the left, and his administration is set on taking this country apart from the inside out. We are dying from the inside out, using far-left, even socialist ideas that have not and will not—will not—ever work in the United States of America.

Democrats are misusing the Federal Government to get their way regardless of what the law, the Constitution, or the American people have to say. No issue shows the radical drift of this administration better than abortion—a very tough and a very important topic.

The far left attacks pro-life Americans, and they distract from the fact that their views go well beyond the beliefs of most Americans and most civilized people around the world. The Biden administration courts an extreme, heartless, and inhumane abortion agenda. Democrats today believe in abortion at any time for any reason with no restrictions or regard for human life.

I am proud to be pro-life for many reasons, including my faith—another thing I will not set aside for political correctness. However, even without considering religion, a society that allows abortion up to and past the moment of birth—after the baby has been born—isn't progressive; it is barbaric, and it is murder.

When the Supreme Court ruled that abortions should be left up to the people, this administration went into overdrive to force their agenda onto every American. Now, to be clear, the Supreme Court ruling did not make abortion illegal. They said: We are going to send it back to the States where it can be more closely decided by the voters. Let the voters decide. That is how we do it in the United States of America, because it is an issue that should not be left up to the Federal Government or to a court. The people should decide. That is what we should do here. That is what we have always done.

The Biden administration is attempting to use, at this time now, our military, our veterans affairs facilities, your taxpayer dollars, maybe even a ridiculous new public health emergency in the very near future to go at this agenda—all to make sure there is unrestricted access to ending the life of an unborn child. That is extreme.

Let's look at how this administration is trying to skirt the law and ignore the Supreme Court and how it will impose the law. Last summer, the Department of Defense claimed that the decision to overturn Roe would have serious impacts on our military readiness—extreme impacts. Of course, they provided no real evidence to back up this claim. But, as usual, they laid out a radical plan to use our military resources to fly folks around the country to get abortions on taxpayer money. American taxpayers are expected to pay for time off, support, and travel costs for servicemembers and their dependents.

For years, the military has funded abortions in three different cases: rape, incest, and a threat to the life of the mother. The new policy that the Department of Defense wants to put forward throws all those restrictions out the door, and opens military facilitated abortion services to millions and millions more people.

It is ridiculous; it is against the law. And they know it. That is why they refused to answer questions asked by Members of Congress when we doubted these plans. The Department of Defense stonewalled—stonewalled—all of our requests for a briefing for months this past fall, only giving us answers after I held up their nominations to force their hands. They were forced to do it.

Those answers were shocking once we had the briefing. The Department of Defense leaders claimed overturning Roe would severely impact military readiness. But the Department has averaged less than 20 abortions per year for many, many years—averaged only 20.

So does this potentially restricting less than 20 procedures a year sound like a threat to our military readiness? It does not. This isn't about readiness. It is about politics.

The new policy would put the American people on the hook to pay for thousands and thousands of abortion trips every year with no clear restrictions. Of course, they have no idea how much it is going to cost the American taxpayer.

The Department of Defense isn't the only department seeking to expand abortion access. Last year, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced a similar policy. Like the Department of Defense, the VA is attempting to circumvent the Supreme Court decision. The VA began performing abortions at taxpayer-funded medical facilities across the country due to the so-called "crisis" created by commonsense restrictions. This includes States like my home State of Alabama, where, by the way, abortion is illegal.

Never mind that the Federal law prohibits the use of VA facilities for abortions. Never mind that. Never mind that the Supreme Court ruled that States can pass their own laws to regulate the issue. That is what the Supreme Court says. Never mind that the VA provided no protections for staff who may have religious objections to performing these procedures. And never mind the cost to taxpayers, the impact on veterans, and the will of the American people. Never mind all that.

The VA providing abortions is against the law—absolutely against the law. It is an unconstitutional abuse of the government, and it should not be tolerated. Last week, more than half of the Republican conference in the Senate and dozens of lawmakers in the House joined me in introducing a resolution disapproving of the VA rule allowing abortion on demand. Our resolution defends the law, the unborn, and

our veterans who depend on the VA for their healthcare. Soon we will force a vote on this resolution, because the American people deserve to know where each Senator in this room stands on the law and protecting life or with abortion at any time. The people need to know that and where everybody stands.

This extreme abortion madness does not appear to be stopping with the military and the VA. The Biden Department of Health and Human Services is reportedly considering declaring a public health emergency on abortion. It is an emergency. The idea would be laughable if it wasn't so seriously wrong for our country. Of course, this is just another power grab. The public health emergency frees up extra money and gives the Federal Government more control. Why else would they do it?

It is just like the sham of the COVID declaration we are still living under somehow. We still have the declaration of emergency. There is no emergency because Roe v. Wade was overturned. Democrats just think that giving Americans the power to self-govern is some kind of crisis.

President Biden seems set on forcing taxpayers to fund an abortion agenda that is completely out of step with the American people. Only 19 percent of Americans support late-term abortion, and a majority support a 15-week ban. But you probably haven't heard that, because pro-life Americans are often silenced.

No more. We will not be silent. We believe every American, including the unborn has a right to life. We believe in the authority of the Supreme Court who made the issue very clear last year: Let the States decide what each voter wants.

We believe our military and VA should be focused on national defense and veterans, not politics. And we believe in a government that works within the law. Using our military and fake emergencies to make sure there are no limits on abortion is absolutely, positively shameful. I will never bow to the mob saying otherwise. It is embarrassing to our country, and I encourage all Americans who believe in the value of human life to stand up and join me.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF DAVID FERDINAND DURENBERGER

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 57, submitted earlier today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 57) honoring the life of David Ferdinand Durenberger, former Senator for the State of Minnesota.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 57) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

REMEMBERING DAVID FERDINAND DURENBERGER

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise with my colleague Senator SMITH, who will be speaking shortly, to recognize the life of Senator David Durenberger, who passed away on January 31, 2023, leaving behind his loving wife Susan, to whom he was married over 27 years, as well as his four sons, two stepchildren, and 14 grandchildren.

Last week, I had the honor of attending Dave's funeral at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, MN. Attendees included Governors of both parties. Governor Pawlenty was there, Governor Walz and Governor Dayton.

It was a fitting venue because in so many ways, Dave was St. John's College. He was raised there by his parents, George and Isabelle, both of whom were faculty members. And as a student at St. John's Prep and St. John's University, he grew up fully immersed in the Benedictine values of faith, listening, respect, stewardship, and justice. Those values shaped what he did.

Shortly after I won my first Senate race, Dave invited me to breakfast, and there is actually a photo of us on the wall when we had that breakfast in that restaurant. He had a few lessons he wanted to share with me. He didn't sugarcoat anything. He said that Washington can "eat you up" and that, too often, the value of stewardship is missing.

He told me to join the prayer breakfast, because he said it was one place where people could talk to each other, nothing would leak, and you could build trust and take a moment and put things in perspective.

I did join the prayer breakfast, and 2 years later, as often happens in these things, I was actually cochairing it with former Senator Johnny Isakson, another good Senator we will miss very much.

Dave also gave me a small book called "The Teachings of Jesus" and told me to keep it in my office, which I did. It is on my bookshelf. And as he predicted, I did look at it in moments of good and moments of bad.

One of the teachings stood out to me as I was reflecting on Dave's life. From Matthew 5:16:

Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

That is Dave. Through the bluster of Washington, Dave found ways to bring his good work and his belief in public service to the rest of the country.

Dave took volunteerism seriously. We saw it in how he lived his life. He paired up with his then-Democratic colleague, Senator Paul Wellstone, on the legislation that created AmeriCorps. As a result of their efforts, millions and millions of Americans have gotten the support that they have needed to better their communities.

Dave's devotion to stewardship is also clear when you look at what he did to promote conservation. It was in that spirit that he worked to successfully secure protections for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, for Voyageurs National Park, and for the Mississippi River. He wanted his grandkids and their kids to be able to experience the natural treasures that Minnesotans have enjoyed for generations.

You simply can't talk about Dave's time in Washington without noting what he did to advance the rights of those with disabilities. From his faith, he carried with him the values of respect for all people, and from his time in former Republican Governor LeVander's office, in working on disability issues, he carried with him a steadfast commitment to improving the lives of disabled people across the country.

Once, through his work in the Governor's office, Dave visited a hospital where he saw patients with disabilities, and in his words, they were warehoused. Most of them, he said, didn't even have clothes on. He knew that as a society we could and must do better, and in Washington, he saw to it that we did.

As I know the Acting President pro tempore is aware, given the leadership torch passed on to her, through his leadership on the Americans with Disabilities Act, he helped to usher in a whole new era of disabilities rights—one where people in wheelchairs weren't trapped in their homes as a result of a lack of ramps, one where disabled people weren't systematically excluded from the workforce, and one where the destitute facilities that once motivated him to take action were phased out in favor of community residential treatment and care services.

In the years that followed, he found a loving partner in Susan, his wife, whose dedication to mental health reform eventually led her to write her book "The Crusade for Forgotten Souls," a rich history of the campaign to provide dignified care to Minnesotans with disabilities. And Minnesota, back through the time of Hubert Humphrey, when he gave his famous speech at the 1948 Democratic National Convention, has always been ahead of itself and the rest of the country when it has come to people with disabilities.

Dave, a Republican, carried on that torch from the other side of the aisle. From the outside, Dave's work often

looked like a manifestation of faith in action, but the way he saw it, he was just doing his job—the good deeds—in letting his light shine onto others.

When Dave left the Senate, it wasn't easy. It has been quite documented what happened. He could have been bitter or he could have just hidden away and ducked down and not taken responsibility, but he didn't. He apologized and kept working. He taught. He would bring his students out here on healthcare. He was an advocate for healthcare reform, and he still spoke around the State. He showed us that that kind of resilience only comes when something happens to someone where they have to decide, Am I going to sink down further in a valley or am I going to rise up on the mountaintop and do good again? That included mentoring new Senators and new people in public office, which included me.

He did good both while he was in the Senate, before he got here, and then, of course, after he left. He had a higher purpose, and he found a way, one way or another, to improve people's lives as a Senator, as an educator, as a husband, as a dad, and as a grandpa. Dave lived every day of his life trying to do good. He learned that, of course, growing up at St. John's, but he brought it to this Chamber and beyond.

Today, Senator SMITH and I are coming together to introduce this resolution, which we are honored has passed, honoring Senator Dave Durenberger, a man whose higher purpose led our country to a higher ground.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. SMITH. Madam President, thank you to my colleague Senator KLOBUCHAR for those very personal words about our shared friend, Senator Dave Durenberger.

I rise today with my colleague Senator KLOBUCHAR to honor the life of Senator Dave Durenberger, whom we lost, as AMY said, on January 31.

Archie and I send all of our support to the Durenberger family—to Susan, Charlie and Lois, Dave and Heather, Michael and Margaret, Daniel and Jennifer—and to all of the family who loved him so well.

When he was first elected to the Senate in 1978, Senator Durenberger became the first Republican Senator from Minnesota in 20 years, but his political affiliation never defined him. Throughout his 16 years in service in the Senate, Senator Durenberger measured his success by doing work that helped people, not by scoring political points for himself or his party.

Long before arriving in Washington, Senator Durenberger was committed to public service and committed to improving the lives of Minnesotans. He was, as Amy said, a proud graduate of St. John's University and the University of Minnesota Law School. He also spent 2 years as an Army officer and 7 more in the Reserves. Later, he served as chief of staff for Gov. Harold LeVander.

When I became chief of staff to Gov. Mark Dayton in 2010, Dave quickly called me up to offer his advice and support, with his characteristic understatement and dry sense of humor.

In Minnesota, Senator Durenberger was respected as a volunteer, a thinker, a doer. He was always ready to pitch in and help with a wide array of organizations that he saw were doing good work, from those dedicated to environmental protection to conservation, to children's health.

In the Senate, Dave built a reputation as a powerful advocate and expert on healthcare reform. He was instrumental in passing the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act, which recognized the civil rights of people living with disabilities, and he was an effective leader on legislation to protect our air and water, to clean up Superfund sites, and to protect public lands so that all of our children and grandchildren could enjoy them forever.

After he left the Senate, he continued to advocate for the things that he cared about, from improving healthcare to protecting the environment. He became one of the Nation's leading health policy experts at the University of St. Thomas and helped to mentor the next generation of health policy leaders.

When I came to the Senate and won a seat on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, a committee that Dave also served on, he immediately reached out to me to offer support and ideas. Every year, he organized a group of young healthcare leaders, through the Health Policy Center at St. Thomas, to come to Washington, and I always made time to sit down and talk with them. It was so great to see how Senator Durenberger continued to instill in these policy fellows the mission of diving in beneath the headlines to figure out exactly what would help to make healthcare more accessible and affordable for everyone.

When Dave was elected to the Senate, he was an Independent Republican, as the Minnesota State party was then called. He later dropped the Republican part and was a proud Independent—always willing to work with both Democrats and Republicans to solve problems. He was an outspoken critic of President Trump, and he lamented the extremism in the Republican Party today. Dave always stood for bipartisanship, pragmatism, and politics that was about improving people's lives. He proudly called himself a progressive Republican. I love that.

If I had to name one thing that characterized Senator Dave Durenberger, it would be his determination to find solutions to the problems that hold people back in their lives, especially problems with healthcare. He didn't care whether an idea came from Republicans or Democrats. He just cared about what was going to make a difference.

As I reflect on his life and his time in the Senate, I am reminded that his

Midwestern brand of bipartisan, commonsense, pragmatic politics still lives on in the Senate today. Beneath the headlines and the division and extremism, many of us on both sides of the aisle still carry on his legacy by working together to try to find common ground and solve problems.

Today, as we mourn the loss of Senator Durenberger, let us take inspiration from his example of thoughtful, pragmatic, and results-oriented politics. May his memory be a blessing.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

#### UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, it was a busy weekend for the U.S. military, which has now shot down three unidentified objects over North American airspace in as many days.

On Friday, an F-22 took down an object hovering over Alaska, which officials described as being about the size of a small car. On Saturday, an F-22 brought down an object over Canada that was described only as cylindrical. On Sunday, an F-16 shot down another unidentified object over Lake Huron, which was traveling at about 20,000 feet—low enough to interfere with commercial air traffic.

Given the high profile of the Chinese spy balloon, this is, obviously, of great interest to the American people.

Over the last several days, starting in late February, the American people watched as China's surveillance balloon traveled across the country before President Biden finally instructed the military to shoot it down off the coast of South Carolina. That was just 9 days ago. The military is still recovering pieces of that balloon from the bottom of the Atlantic in an effort to gain some answers, but given everything that has happened in the interim, the swirl of questions has only grown.

The United States has shot down four objects flying over our country since February 4, and they have identified one of those four objects. Based on what we know now or perhaps what we don't know now, we know the government has shot down three objects of unknown provenance. Since they don't know what they are, presumably, they don't know where they came from; yet the President ordered them shot down. We have not been told whether they were emitting any sort of signature, like heat, which might be picked up by an infrared sensor, or some other signal, with data either coming from or going to that object. So you can imagine that the American people have a lot of questions about these unidentified objects as well as the broader threat to our national interest.

They are looking to the administration for answers, and the only path forward is full and complete transparency. President Biden needs to explain what happened and just how concerned the

American people should be, and he needs to consult with Congress and share the information he has with us. Until that happens, speculation will only intensify. If you don't know what the cause of a particular concern is or an anxiety or maybe even a threat, it is only human nature to speculate and imagine the very worst. So the last several days have prompted a lot of questions, and I hope the administration will provide some necessary answers soon.

I expect the Chinese spy balloon and these unidentified objects will be the topics of discussion in the Senate this week. I know all of our colleagues, Republican and Democrat alike, are eager to learn more, and I hope the administration will be what it has not yet been, and that is forthright and transparent.

#### STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Madam President, on another matter, this last week, President Biden spoke at his State of the Union Address about the looming debt crisis, but instead of a plea for unity and bipartisanship and working together, he turned it into political fearmongering and finger-pointing. He even suggested that Republicans wanted to cut funding for Social Security and Medicare, on which millions upon millions of seniors depend—something that could not be further from the truth. You might call it the Big Lie.

Speaker MCCARTHY is leading debt ceiling discussions for Republicans, and he has been absolutely clear that these programs are not on the chopping block. As the American people witnessed last Tuesday evening, Republicans all agree on this point. Social Security and Medicare are a lifeline for seniors and some of the most vulnerable people in our country, and these programs are not going anywhere, period.

But what the President and our Democratic colleagues have failed to acknowledge is that the status quo is not sustainable, particularly when it comes to Social Security. We are told by the actuaries that unless Congress does something, Social Security and Medicare will become insolvent and incapable of paying the benefits upon which millions of seniors depend.

I have to ask whether the President, by this fearmongering, made it easier or harder for us to work together to meet our responsibilities and to eliminate the threat of insolvency, which we are on a path to if Congress does nothing. Did the President make it more likely that Republicans and Democrats would work together to provide for the solvency and survival of Social Security or Medicare by fearmongering and finger-pointing? I think we all know he did not.

Projections show that Social Security recipients will see a reduction of almost 25 percent in their benefits if nothing changes. So we know we have to do something. Texans who live on a fixed income cannot handle a 25-percent cut. They are already struggling